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15. — *Fathers and Sons.* A Novel by IVAN SERGHEÏEVITCH TURGENEF. Translated from the Russian with the Approval of the Author by EUGENE SCHUYLER, Ph. D. New York: Leypoldt and Holt. 1867. 12mo. pp. viii., 248.

MR. SCHUYLER has not only translated well a book that deserved translating, but he has opened to us a new literature, and introduced us to fresh walks of fiction. The most jaded novel-reader will find entertainment in this story, and to those to whom novel-reading is a refreshment after the fatigue of serious work it may be cordially recommended. Without being a work of high genius, it is an exceedingly good novel, full of character and incident closely studied from nature, and treated with vigor and sense. It is interesting, not merely from its story, but because it affords a picture of life and manners remote from our own, yet not so remote as to be simply objects of curiosity, but developed under the influence of those general principles which control the present progress and conditions of European civilization, and thus brought into close relation with our own.

The author of "Fathers and Sons," as we learn from the excellent Preface of Mr. Schuyler, was born in 1818. His life has been passed in easy circumstances, and has been mainly devoted to literature. He is now the most successful and popular novelist in Russia. "Fathers and Sons" was first published in 1861. It excited at once great attention, and was the object of eager and heated criticism and discussion. "The more the book was abused, the more it was read. Its success has been greater than that of any other Russian book. It has therefore been selected as the best specimen of modern Russian literature to present to the American public."

The story is one of our own times, and Mr. Turgenev's design seems to have been to represent in it the most marked phases of existing Russian life and thought. His characters exhibit the various features of the older and younger generation of living Russians; and while his book thus acquires an interest superior to that of a mere novel of incident, it is exposed to failure as a work of art from the temptation in such a case to make the characters typical of classes rather than true portrayals of individuals. Mr. Turgenev has not altogether escaped from this danger. In the earlier part of his novel the characters are too consistently exhibited as types, rather than with the inevitable inconsistencies of men; but as the story proceeds and increases in interest, they become more and more individualized, and we have real men and women sketched with a free and vigorous hand. The movement of the story is rapid, its whole course being condensed within a few months; the incidents are simple,

but not wanting in interest, and the situations are natural and dramatic. There is great animation in the conversations, and the descriptive parts of the book are not only vivid and picturesque, but they show that the author possesses a sentiment of the beauty of Nature, and is a careful observer of her various displays. He has both humor and pathos, and he is quite free from exaggeration in the use of these perilous faculties.

The book is not one of which an abstract of the story would convey a sufficient or even a correct notion, because the story is itself intended as a vehicle of ideas. It is a book that may be read for information, as well as for entertainment. The very fact that it was written for Russians, — that its whole conception, scenery, and development are Russian, — makes it the more interesting to foreigners. It is so good that we hope that Mr. Schuyler will go on to give us translations of Mr. Turgenev's other works. We have little doubt that the public will welcome them cordially. We commend this one, at least, as a novel far better worth reading than most of those which come from the press, and we are grateful to Mr. Schuyler for the real pleasure which his translation has afforded us.

The translation is, on the whole, very well executed, and in great part, especially as the story advances, it reads almost with the freedom and idiomatic raciness of an original work.

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16. — *Critical and Social Essays, reprinted from the New York Nation.*

New York: Leypoldt and Holt. 1867. 12mo. pp. 230.

THE reputation which the Nation has justly acquired during the last two years, not only for the general ability with which it is conducted, but also for the unusual literary merit of many of its articles, will be extended and confirmed by the publication of this little volume. It contains twenty-five essays, by various hands, and on a great variety of topics of present interest. All are entertaining, clever, and well written; and some of them deserve the higher praise of being the condensed statement of vigorous thought upon questions of practical importance. The value of these essays is not purely literary, but consists much more in the reflection they afford of the best thinking and temper of the times in their sympathetic and intelligent criticism of prevailing forms of life.

We trust that this is but the first of a series of similar volumes. The Nation has a right to count on long life. It fairly represents, as no other of our weekly journals does, the best thought and culture of America. It is in the worthiest sense American in tone and principle.